

Indiana University
Request for a New Credit Certificate Program

Campus: IUPUI

Proposed Title of Certificate Program: *Graduate Certificate in Teaching Writing*

Projected Date of Implementation: Spring 2009

TYPE OF CERTIFICATE: (check one)

UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATES – These programs generally require 12-29 credits of undergraduate-level academic work.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES – These programs generally require 12-29 credits of graduate-level academic work or undergraduate academic work carrying graduate credit.

POST-BACCALAUREATE CERTIFICATES – These programs generally require 12-29 credits of undergraduate-level academic work, although students enrolling in these programs must have completed their baccalaureate degrees.

I. Why is this certificate needed? (Rationale)

The *Graduate Certificate in Teaching Writing* would be a program of study designed primarily for those certified as middle school or high school teachers. The *Certificate* program would be open to teachers in any subject area. According to the Indiana Department of Education Professional Standards, “teachers must renew their licenses by completing six (6) semester hours of approved college courses every five (5) years.” The *Certificate* program would provide an opportunity for area teachers to begin work in a structured program and would enable the department to strengthen its professional mentorship of area teachers. In addition, the *Certificate* would serve as a feeder program for the M.A. in English. The *Graduate Certificate* does not automatically lead to a graduate degree, but the credits earned could be applied toward the M.A. in English upon acceptance into the M.A.; credits earned could possibly apply as well to a graduate degree in Education.

The *Graduate Certificate* program would address the needs of licensed teachers who want to keep abreast of developments in disciplinary knowledge and best practices in teaching writing, including the uses of technology and new media in writing instruction. In the field of rhetoric and composition, the shift to a process-oriented curriculum, redefined the traditional roles of teacher and student and established individualized conferences, collaborative learning, self-reflective writing, Writers’ Workshop, and portfolio assessment as important teaching and learning tools. The pervasive use of

technology in our culture and also the challenges that face teachers in a multilingual, multicultural environment make it even more imperative that today's teachers acquire a knowledge of writing as a disciplinary field and adopt an informed, reflective, and research-based approach to the teaching of writing.

As recent articles in the Indianapolis *Star* have reported, area schools are lagging behind the national average in assessments of student writing ability. A Certificate program would be attractive to teachers because it would offer the theories and best practices in the teaching of writing that contribute to improvement in student writing. While our undergraduate students in English Education are now required to take coursework in the teaching of writing, no such requirement or structured program exists for middle school and high school teachers to advance their knowledge of writing instruction. The *Certificate* program would be a model for achieving collaboration between university and school teachers and curricula. In addition, the *Graduate Certificate* would enable our part-time writing faculty and lecturers in other disciplines to continue their professional development, as well as our M.A. students (and those in other programs such as the M.A. in Language Education) to earn a certificate in writing to enhance their professional teaching careers.

The aims of the *Certificate* program are as follows:

- To take a leading role in the continuing education of Indiana's teachers and improve the quality of instruction in the teaching of writing at the middle school and high school levels.
- To recognize teachers who pursue professional development through course work in a structured program of study.
- To encourage middle school and high school teachers to pursue a graduate degree in English (credits may apply toward an M.A. in English) or one in Education.
- To strengthen IUPUI's, and especially the School of Liberal Arts', professional mentorship of Indiana's middle school and high school teachers.

II. List the major topics and curriculum of the certificate.

Teachers would earn a *Certificate* by satisfactorily completing five graduate courses, or a minimum of 20 credit hours, in the teaching of writing. The five graduate courses would consist of one core course and four elective courses. Major topics would include theories and methods of teaching writing; understanding linguistic diversity; uses of technology in writing; social aspects of writing development; non-fiction writing; writing assessment; and teacher research.

Core courses (4 cr.):

L509 Introduction to Writing and Literacy Studies (4 cr.)

Elective courses: (16 cr.)

W500 Teaching Writing: Issues and Approaches (4 cr.)
W505 Graduate Creative Non-fiction Writing (4 cr.)
W508 Graduate Creative Writing for Teachers (4 cr.)
W510 Computers in Composition (3 cr.)
W531 Designing and Editing Visual Technical Communication (4 cr.)
W553 Theory and Practice of Exposition (4 cr.)
W590 Teaching Composition: Theory and Practice (4 cr.)
W600 Topics in Rhetoric and Composition: Language, Dialects, and Writing (4 cr.)
W605 The Writing Project Summer Institute (4 cr.)
W609 Individual Writing Projects (1-4 cr.)
W697 Independent Study in Writing (1-3 cr.) (Writing Project Advanced Institute)

III. What are the admission requirements?

Admission to the *Certificate* program would require one of the following:

- (1) State certification in middle school or high school teaching;
- (2) Current enrollment as a Graduate student at IUPUI;
- (3) Successful completion of an M.A. degree or higher at an accredited university;
- (4) Successful completion of a B.A. with a minimum GPA of 3.0 (out of 4.0) or the equivalent from an accredited institution.

To facilitate the schedules of grade 6-12 teachers, our primary audience, courses would be offered on weekends, weekday evenings, and during the summer.

IV. List the major student outcomes (or set of performance based standards) for the proposed certificate.

- To understand and be able to apply recent approaches and philosophies in teaching writing.
- To understand the nature of the “writing process” and how it can be effectively taught.
- To create effective writing assignments with support activities and assessment tools.
- To recognize and utilize linguistic diversity as a means of teaching edited American English.
- To acquire an informed, reflective, research-based approach to major issues in teaching writing.
- To investigate the uses of technology in writing as a process and product.
- To develop and articulate a clearer sense of one’s own theory of teaching writing.
- To understand writing as a learned activity and how one learns to write.
- To develop confidence in oneself as a writer and use one’s own writing practice to develop writing curriculum.

V. Explain how student learning outcomes will be assessed (student portfolios, graduate follow up, employer survey, standardized test, etc.) and describe the structure/process for reviewing assessment findings for the purpose of ensuring continuous improvement of the certificate.

Students will confer with graduate faculty in planning their selection of elective courses. Student learning outcomes will be assessed in individual courses through reflective writing assignments, formal research-based papers, and the practice of creating and evaluating teaching materials. Some courses may require that students prepare a portfolio.

The assessment of the Certificate program will consist of three parts: (1) faculty advisers will consult with program participants about their progress and the range and quality of their learning experiences, (2) sample papers from students' work in different courses will be reviewed to ensure that the aims of the program are being met, and (3) graduates of the *Certificate* program will be contacted for follow-up reports on their progress as writing teachers, the effectiveness of the *Certificate* program, and suggestions for improvement. A committee of writing faculty will meet annually to review assessment data and to recommend changes for program improvement.

VI. Describe student population to be served.

The *Graduate Certificate* will target primarily those who are licensed teachers in middle school and high school. The primary audience will be full-time middle school and high school teachers. In addition, the *Graduate Certificate* will be open to part-time writing faculty and lecturers in other disciplines, as well as our M.A. students and those in other programs (such as the M.A. in Language Education offered in the School of Education) who would be interested in earning a certificate in writing to enhance their professional teaching careers. In an informal survey of Indiana licensed middle school and high school teachers, 19% responded that they would not be interested in a *Graduate Certificate in Teaching Writing*, 38% responded that they would be "somewhat interested," and 44% responded they would be "very interested." The 19% who said they would not be interested were either living a considerable distance from campus or already had an M.A. and felt adequately prepared for teaching writing.

VII. How does this certificate complement the campus or departmental mission?

IUPUI's mission is "to advance the State of Indiana and the intellectual growth of its citizens...." The School of Liberal Arts (SLA) complements IUPUI's mission with its vision of fostering "life-long learning that engenders commitment to civil society through an engaged and educated community." Of the six Goals for implementing SLA's vision, one is "to teach students well, providing them with the academic, technological, and practical skills requisite for meaningful and satisfying lives and careers"; another is "to seek and build partnerships that shape and support its constituent communities"; and a third is "to better communicate its purpose and value to constituent communities."

The *Graduate Certificate in Teaching Writing* offers licensed teachers in our communities an opportunity to continue their professional development in a structured program consisting of current theory and best practices in teaching writing. The *Certificate* program will enable writing faculty to engage in professional mentorship and will create opportunities to strengthen our partnership with the School of Education and create new partnerships with area schools and programs. Moreover, the *Certificate* program will provide the venue for our writing faculty to influence the education of Indiana's citizens through our partnership with licensed teachers, as we share knowledge of our discipline and ultimately improve the quality of teaching and learning in Indiana schools.

VIII. Describe any relationship to existing programs on the campus or within the university.

The English for Specific Purposes Program offers a certificate for students who have a baccalaureate degree and who desire training in teaching non-native speakers of English. This program focuses on the theories and methods of teaching English as a second or foreign language, whereas our proposed certificate focuses on teaching English to native speakers, with a focus on writing.

The School of Education offers a master's degree in secondary education, as well as certification in teaching secondary English through post-graduate work, either transition-to-teaching or simply a post-undergraduate licensing program. These programs, however, do not focus on the teaching of writing. We have discussed the proposed *Certificate* program with language arts faculty in the School of Education and see it as complementary to their efforts in professional development of practicing teachers.

IX. List and indicate the resources required to implement the proposed program. Indicate sources (e.g., reallocations or any new resources such as personnel, library holdings, equipment, etc.).

We do not anticipate needing any additional resources to implement the *Graduate Certificate in Teaching Writing*. However, the English Department does need additional tenure-line faculty in writing (composition and rhetoric), and we will make this case to the School of Liberal Arts in the near future.

X. Describe any innovative features of the program (e.g., involvement with local or regional agencies, or offices, cooperative efforts with other institutions, etc.).

This program builds on the close connections that English Department writing faculty have forged with area schools and teachers and with national professional organizations, as well as their expertise in teaching writing. Kim Brian Lovejoy, as associate editor of the *Journal of Teaching Writing* (the only national journal focused on the teaching of writing at all levels, K-college), has worked closely with middle and high school teachers

of English and with the Indiana Teachers of Writing (ITW), sponsoring organization of the *Journal*. Steve Fox has been Director of the ITW Writing Project since 1996; the ITWWP, affiliated with the acclaimed National Writing Project, offers summer institutes and year-round workshops to area teachers. Professors Lovejoy and Fox worked with the IUPUI School of Education to develop the current content area requirements for English Education majors, and Prof. Fox has served on the IUPUI Council on Teacher Education (COTE) since its inception. Susanmarie Harrington is a nationally recognized scholar in the field of composition and helped develop the Outcomes for first-year writing; she also worked on Project SEAM that worked on articulation of college and high school writing curriculum. Tere Molinder Hogue, Coordinator of the IUPUI Writing Center, is an expert in writing centers and has developed the highly effective Fellows program for Writing Center student tutors. She has worked closely with pre-service teachers in the Fellows program and in G204, a course taken by many education majors. Professor Marj Rush-Hovde is nationally known for her scholarship in technical writing and visual literacy as well as her observational studies of workplace communication practices.

Students will have opportunities to participate in institutes and workshops offered by the ITW Writing Project, earning credits toward their *Graduate Certificate*. In addition, internships will be available for hands-on learning experiences, such as in IUPUI's Writing Center and in special projects with the *Journal of Teaching Writing*.